



235 Comments

10 Recommend

Search

advanced search | archives



Chron.com

Web Search by YAHOO!

Police: Mullis showing remorse

Slain baby's dad to return to Texas as early as Tuesday

By KATHRINE SCHMIDT Copyright 2008 Houston Chronicle
Feb. 4, 2008, 3:43PM

1 2 3



A couple found Alijah Mullis, shown with his mother, Caren Kohberger, dead about a mile east of Ferry Road on Galveston Island.

PHILADELPHIA — The Alvin man who police say confessed to killing his 3-month-old son waived his right to extradition today and is scheduled to return Tuesday to Texas, where he faces a capital murder charge.

Travis Mullis, 21, has been held here since he surrendered on Friday in Philadelphia, more than 1,550 miles from Galveston, and confessed to killing the baby "by stomping on Alijah Mullis' head with his foot three to four times until he felt the skull collapsing," police said.

A Galveston couple found the baby dead on Jan. 29, about a mile east of Ferry Road on Galveston Island. The county's Medical Examiner's Office on Wednesday ruled the death a homicide caused by a head wound.

Mullis has been held without bail as a fugitive and must return to Texas before the murder case against him can proceed.

"We're hoping we can get on the plane (Tuesday)," said Sgt. Gary Jones, one of the four Galveston investigators who traveled to Philadelphia to investigate the case and bring Mullis home. Jones, who spoke to reporters after the brief extradition waiver hearing Monday at the Philadelphia Criminal Justice Center, wouldn't say if they'd travel by charter or commercial flight, or what time they might depart.

In his first public exposure since he surrendered, a subdued Mullis appeared before Judge Jeffrey Minehart wearing an orange prison uniform that hung loosely off his thin body. His hands were shackled, his hair was blondish-red, and he wore wire-rim glasses.

"Do you still wish to give up to your right to have an extradition hearing?" Minehart asked.

"Yes, I do," Mullis replied, after affirming that he understood what was going on and was not under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or medication. At the end of the hearing, he signed paperwork making it official.

Assistant District Attorney John Doyle said the extradition waiver process had gone smoothly and was typical for similar cases.

Dan Stevenson, of the Defender Association of Philadelphia, represented Mullis and said he seemed ready to get back to Texas.

"He seems eager to return," Stevenson said. "He said, 'There's no point in me staying here.'"

He said that Mullis didn't yet have an attorney to defend him against the Texas charges.

"We tried to arrange that today, but were unsuccessful."

Although he was only placed on the case about an hour before the hearing, Stevenson called Mullis "nervous" and "remorseful."

"He seems really rocky," Stevenson said. "He was crying when I spoke to him."

Meanwhile, two Galveston investigators went to Maryland Monday morning looking for clues about how and why Mullis went to Pennsylvania. They've been to Abingdon, where Mullis lived for about five years as a teenager, as well as other towns, said Sgt. Annie Almendarez of the Galveston Police.

"We're still out in the field investigating," said Almendarez, who explained she spoke to several of Mullis' relatives Monday morning, but declined to say who.

She also said the two crime scene investigators who stayed behind in Philadelphia finished examining Mullis' vehicle, but

Rockets trade will acquire Jermaine Taylor, Sergio Llull

Michael Jackson, el rey del pop, muere a los 50 años

Noose just a knot, Houston fire captain's wife says

King of Pop Michael Jackson dies
1 dead, another injured in Pasadena wreck

Feds seek status of officer's killer(970)

Michael Jackson reportedly rushed to the hospital(369)

Obama: Texas gains more than loses in my energy plan(308)

How Sanford affair started: e-mails. How it ended: in tears(240)

Houston never hotter in June(174)

Hurt links hard times to rise in burglaries

Death row inmate's bid for release delayed

Passenger dies in northwest Houston crash

Man shot to death in Houston sports bar bathroom

Body found in SE Houston lot identified as woman, 39

Houston says goodbye to slain HPD officer

Houston's still waiting for some rain

Slain baby's dad will likely return to Texas tonight

Affidavit: Father says he killed baby for crying

Slain infant's mother arrested in New York

Texas mother of slain baby arrested in New York

Slain infant's mother charged with endangerment

Death penalty sought in baby's Galveston stomping death

Airline bars suspect in Galveston baby's death

Doogie will cut you

Houston victims' advocate finds unlikely ally — the Son of Sam

Letters link Son of Sam and victims' advocate



Print



Share



Del.icio.us



Digg



Twitter



Yahoo! Buzz



Facebook



StumbleUpon

Father surrenders in Pennsylvania
Images from the case

TIMELINE

• **Tuesday:** The diaper-clad body of 3-month-old Alijah Mullis is discovered on a Galveston Island roadside. After interviewing his mother, police seek Travis Mullis for questioning.

• **Wednesday:** Galveston County Medical

Examiner's Office rules the death a homicide caused by a head wound.

- **Thursday:** Brazoria County issues an arrest warrant for Mullis, accusing him of taking an 8-year-old girl from her bed and asking her to pull her pants down.

- **Friday:** Mullis surrenders to police in Philadelphia and admits he killed his son by stomping him to death.

- **Saturday:** Mother Caren Kohberger holds a tearful memorial service for Alijah.

wouldn't say what they found. Jones, one of the investigators, would say only that "I believe it has been a successful trip."

Mullis is being held at the Curran-Fromhold Correctional Facility, a nearby jail where he is separated from the general inmate population.

"Any high profile case would get the same treatment," spokesman Bob Eskind said.

He's held alone in an 8-by-10 foot cell with one bed, a toilet, and sink, Eskind said. New inmates also undergo a behavioral health screening, classification interview and an intake social worker interview.

At the hearing, Mullis' replies were mostly yes and no answers, but he did state his name and address for the judge.

When the judge asked him about his previous mental health history, he said he had taken behavioral drugs in the past "until about three years ago when I ran out of financial funds to cover it."

kathrine.schmidt@chron.com